

HCS HB 261 -- HUMAN TRAFFICKING

SPONSOR: Brown (94)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 9 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Rules - Legislative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 0.

The bill requires various establishments, specified in the bill, to display a poster in a conspicuous place near the entrance of the establishment, starting March 1, 2018, that provides information regarding human trafficking, including what it is and resources victims have for getting help. Any establishment required to display the poster but fails to do so will be subject to the penalty provisions of this bill.

The Department of Public Safety will create the poster before January 1, 2018, and it will be made available for print on the department's website.

This bill is similar to SCS HCS HB 2561 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this is a step forward in fighting human trafficking. Victims have the ability to reach out through a website, a hotline, and a phone number, which they can text or call. Furthermore, a warning is issued to businesses before a fine is assessed when businesses required to display the poster do not.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Brown; Ellen Alper, National Council of Jewish Women-St. Louis; Missouri Kids First; Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Sexual Violence; Missouri Association For Social Welfare; and Missouri Family Network.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.